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THE SITUATION IN CENTRAL AMERICA: THREATS TO INTERNATIONAL PEACE AND SECURITY AND PEACE INITIATIVES

SECURITY COUNCIL
Forty-sixth year

Letter dated 15 March 1991 from the Permanent Representatives of Costa Rica and Nicaragua to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

We are writing to transmit to you a true copy of the Joint Declaration and the Agreement on Cooperation signed by His Excellency Mr. Rafael Angel Calderón Fournier, President of the Republic of Costa Rica, and Her Excellency Mrs. Violeta Barrios de Chamorro, President of the Republic of Nicaragua, at Managua on 30 January 1991 (see annexes I and II respectively).

We should be grateful if you would have this letter and its annexes circulated as an official document of the General Assembly, under agenda item 28, and of the Security Council.

(Signed) Cristián TATTENBACH IGLESIAS
Ambassador
Permanent Representative of
Costa Rica to the United Nations

(Signed) Roberto MAYORGA-CORTES
Ambassador
Permanent Representative of
Nicaragua to the United Nations

ANNEX I

Joint Declaration

The President of the Republic of Costa Rica, Mr. Rafael Angel Calderón Fournier, and the President of the Republic of Nicaragua, Mrs. Violeta Barrios de Chamorro, meeting in Managua on 30 and 31 January 1991;

Reaffirming the spirit of fraternity and friendship which has traditionally united the two countries and which is now preparing the ground for a new and fruitful relationship;

Bearing in mind that the territorial proximity of their peoples and their constant yearning for freedom have given them a shared destiny, on the basis of a common vision inspired by such lasting values as peace, liberty, democracy and social justice;

Stressing their conviction that the strengthening of bilateral bonds is of paramount importance in promoting the development of their peoples and in furthering the peace and democratization process in Central America, to which they give top priority in their endeavours;

I. Drew attention to the historical significance of the meeting, which marks the beginning of a new chapter in bilateral relations between their peoples and Governments, at a time when most countries of the world have embraced the cause of democracy and when, at the regional level, the peace process in Central America has entered a new and encouraging political and economic phase, in which there is an urgent need to consolidate the gains and usher in an end to warfare and a process of national reconciliation in all the countries, in the conviction that regional peace is indivisible.

II. They reiterated their Governments' firm commitment to promote demilitarization in Central America. In that spirit, they have agreed to make a concerted effort to ensure that the negotiations on security, verification, and the control and limitation of weapons and military forces culminate as soon as possible in the signing of an agreement in that important area. In this connection, the two Governments, as a means of promoting a climate of trust, will make public in Managua, at the next meeting of the Security Commission established under the Esquipulas agreements, their inventories of weapons, and military and security forces.

Within the framework of the activities approved by the Security Commission, they agreed to urge Governments which have special mine-clearing equipment to cooperate with the Governments of Costa Rica and Nicaragua in mine-clearing operations in the border region, so as to achieve the objectives. They made a similar appeal with the aim of ensuring the disarming of civilians in Nicaragua.

They further decided to make the point that it is important for the Organization of American States (OAS) to play an active role in the effort to

reduce armaments and military forces in Latin America. They decided to make joint efforts and initiatives in OAS to that end.

III. They reiterated their firm commitment to respect, protect and promote all the basic human rights and freedoms without reservations, as a prerequisite for genuine national processes of democratization and reconciliation in Central America.

They noted that this commitment is a key element in the Declaration of Central America as a zone of peace, democracy, freedom and development, recently proclaimed at the Puntarenas summit meeting. This marks the emergence of a fresh approach to the future of the region, and signifies its commitment to the values inspired by the Esquipulas process.

IV. The President of the Republic of Costa Rica placed on record his appreciation to the President of Nicaragua for the gains made in the process of democratization and national reconciliation, as well as for the progress in gradually reducing military forces.

V. After reviewing the current situation in El Salvador, they decided to stress the need to intensify the process of dialogue, with a view to producing an agreement to end the armed conflict, thereby creating a better atmosphere for the forthcoming elections, as well as conditions more conducive to genuine national reconciliation on the basis of unconditional respect for human rights. In this connection, they decided to urge the Secretary-General of the United Nations to redouble his efforts to bring about an early solution to the conflict in El Salvador.

VI. They expressed their profound satisfaction with the results of the recent summit meeting at Tuxtla Gutiérrez between the President of the United Mexican States and the Central American Presidents, which has opened up new and encouraging prospects for cooperation and friendship between Mexico and Central America. They expressed their gratitude to President Carlos Salinas de Gortari for that initiative, which is a sterling example of collaboration and coordination for development, in the broadest manifestation of Latin Americanism.

Likewise, they welcomed the fact that, at the Tuxtla Gutiérrez summit meeting, the Ministers for Foreign Affairs of Venezuela and Colombia expressed a desire to become involved in the effort towards regional integration.

VII. In reviewing and assessing the state of bilateral relations between their countries, they agreed to establish a binational commission for the purpose of energizing and enhancing cooperation between their respective peoples and Governments.

1. In discussing the question of security, and with a view to working closely to promote progress and ensure peace and quiet in the border region, they agreed to instruct the relevant authorities to streamline and strengthen the machinery for communications and the exchange of information between border command posts, as well as for joint patrols and monitoring, with the aim of preventing and combating trafficking in arms, illicit production of and trafficking in narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances, and other criminal acts.

Within the context of the joint efforts to combat drug trafficking, they decided to pool their resources for better monitoring of the border region.

They also drew attention to the valuable opportunities offered by collaboration with Mexico and Colombia in that area, on the basis of their participation in the work of the Central American Commission established under the Agreement on Regional Cooperation for the Eradication of Illicit Traffic in Drugs.

2. On the question of migration between the two countries, they decided to strengthen cooperation in respect of migration controls, using modern computerized systems, and to facilitate the transit of nationals of the two States. To that end, they agreed to abolish visa requirements for holders of diplomatic, official and service passports, and to institute a system of multiple visas for merchants and businessmen.

They welcomed the progress made in respect of voluntary repatriation and the integration of Nicaraguan refugees. To that end, they decided to urge the international community to increase support for cooperation programmes in that area.

3. Taking into account the ongoing development of the relationship of friendship and cooperation between the Governments of Costa Rica and Nicaragua, and the favourable climate thus created, they agreed that during their respective presidential terms, they would work to produce agreements on the delimitation of maritime zones.

4. Within the framework of close cooperation on environmental issues, they agreed to continue promoting development of the project entitled "International system of areas protected for peace (SIAPAZ)", and urged the international community to support that valuable initiative.

5. The Presidents, after looking thoroughly into the issues of trade, investments, cooperation and debt within the context of the exceptional circumstances currently obtaining in Nicaragua and the decisions adopted in paragraphs 14 and 15 of the Declaration of Puntarenas, agreed to instruct their respective Ministers of Economic Affairs and Development to continue studying a broad agenda that would include such issues as economic complementarity, creation of financial mechanisms and the active participation of private entrepreneurs from both countries in the national development efforts.

6. Discussing cooperation in the area of health, the President of Nicaragua expressed profound gratitude for Costa Rica's gift of a significant batch of medicines, which constitutes a further gesture of traditional Costa Rican solidarity. The President of Costa Rica confirmed the keen interest of his Government in furthering this cooperation in such areas as the training of technical personnel and the expansion of health assistance programmes.

They drew attention to the remarkable increase in cooperative and interrelated activities in the area of health between Costa Rica and Nicaragua and, in that context, expressed their very strong support for the execution of the second stage of the Plan for Priority Health Needs in Central America and Panama, implemented

context, expressed their very strong support for the execution of the second stage of the Plan for Priority Health Needs in Central America and Panama, implemented with assistance from PAHO/WHO, which is to be submitted to the international conference on health to be held in Madrid in May.

7. The Presidents underscored the importance of educational exchanges in the development process. The President of Costa Rica expressed his Government's interest in facilitating cooperation in this area by establishing quotas and scholarships for Nicaraguan students at the National University and at the University of Costa Rica and by offering to set up, in Nicaragua, university centres for distance education within the context of the programmes of the National University for Distance Education (UNED).

8. The Presidents agreed to underscore the great importance of the ministerial meeting, in Managua, on political dialogue and economic cooperation between the European Community and its member States, the countries of Central America and Panama and the Group of Three as the starting-point for a new phase of cooperation between the two regions.

VIII. The Presidents, within the context of the proclamation issued by the President of Costa Rica, concerning a new ecological order of international cooperation, agreed to pursue joint efforts in order to further the principles contained in that crucial initiative.

IX. They expressed their very deep concern at the evolution of events in the Persian Gulf, stemming from the illegal occupation of Kuwait by Iraq, and called most earnestly for a prompt resolution of the conflict on the basis of respect for international law and, in particular, for the principles of the Charter of the United Nations that govern peaceful coexistence between States, as set forth in General Assembly resolution 2625 (XXV).

X. The Presidents expressed their very strong condemnation of the attack carried out the previous day on the President of Guatemala, Jorge Serrano Elías, and confirmed their solidarity with the democratic process in that sister country.

In thanking the Nicaraguan Government and people for the great courtesy extended to him, during his stay, President Rafael Angel Calderón Fournier, invited the President of Nicaragua to pay an official visit to Costa Rica in the near future.

The Presidents signed this Joint Declaration in the city of Managua, Republic of Nicaragua, on 31 January 1991.

Rafael Angel Calderón Fournier
President of the Republic of
Costa Rica

Violeta Barrios de Chamorro
President of the Republic of
Nicaragua

ANNEX II

Cooperation on agreement between the Governments of Costa Rica and Nicaragua

The Presidents of Costa Rica and Nicaragua, considering that their States share a common border and that the peoples and Governments of Costa Rica and Nicaragua have coinciding interests,

Conscious of the importance of intensifying relations of cooperation between the Parties, without detriment to their international commitments,

Convinced that economic growth and the well-being of their peoples are essential to the achievement and consolidation of genuinely democratic, pluralistic and participatory systems,

Resolved to consolidate, strengthen and breathe new life into relations between their peoples, giving them renewed momentum in the context of a new vision of cooperation through concrete, specific and coordinated actions in areas of mutual interest,

Expressing their conviction that it is essential to promote and coordinate collaboration between their peoples and Governments through binational mechanisms responsible for executing the activities and programmes to be established between Costa Rica and Nicaragua,

Have agreed as follows:

Article 1

The Presidents agree to strengthen and expand cooperation and concerted action in the following areas: political affairs, security affairs, affairs relating to the border and to migration, affairs relating to the environment and health, affairs relating to property and finance, economic and commercial affairs, educational and cultural affairs and affairs relating to tourism.

Article 2

The Presidents agree to establish a Binational Commission, presided over by the authorized representatives of the two countries and consisting of representatives of the Governments and private sectors, to follow up, evaluate and identify activities, programmes and projects in the areas set forth in article 1 of this Agreement.

The organs of the Binational Commission shall be:

I. The Presidential Meeting

II. The Meeting of Ministers

III. The Bilateral Technical Group.

Article 3

The Presidents of the two countries shall meet once a year, alternately in Costa Rica and in Nicaragua, with a view to reviewing, evaluating and promoting relations between Costa Rica and Nicaragua and also in order to identify the general guidelines for action which shall be recorded in the Final Act to be issued at the conclusion of their meetings.

Article 4

With a view to discussing, exchanging views on and preparing the programme of work for the Presidential Meeting, the Meeting of Ministers, presided over by the Ministers for Foreign Affairs of the two countries and consisting of the appropriate ministers in accordance with the areas outlined in article 1, shall convene once a year.

Article 5

The Presidents agree to establish a Bilateral Technical Group as the mechanism for following up the activities, programmes and projects established by and stemming from this Agreement. This Group shall be made up of the various national institutions and shall be responsible for coordinating and executing the programmes, activities and projects relating to cooperation and concerted action developed within the context of this Agreement.

Article 6

In each country the Bilateral Technical Group shall be presided over by representatives of the respective Ministries of Foreign Affairs.

Article 7

The Bilateral Technical Group shall report every six months to the Meeting of Ministers; the latter may hold a special meeting for the purpose of considering and evaluating the report.

Article 8

On the basis of the report received, the Ministers for Foreign Affairs of both countries shall report and make recommendations to their Presidents concerning the state of relations between Costa Rica and Nicaragua.

Article 9

This Agreement shall remain in force for an initial period of five years and shall be extended automatically for further five-year periods, without prejudice to the right of each Party to terminate the Agreement by notifying the other in writing of its desire to do so; such notification shall take effect six months later.

This Agreement shall come into force 60 days after the date of its signature.

The provisions of this Agreement shall not affect any rights or obligations which the signatory countries may have contracted in relation to other agreements, conventions or treaties signed between them.

In witness whereof, they sign this Agreement in two equally authentic copies in the city of Managua, Nicaragua, on 31 January 1991.

Violeta Barrios de Chamorro
President of Nicaragua

Rafael Angel Calderón Fournier
President of Costa Rica